UNITED NATIONS

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Secretariat

ST/AI/1997/4
30 September 1997

ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION*

UPGRADING OF SUBSTANTIVE AND TECHNICAL SKILLS

Pursuant to section 4 of Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/1997/1, the Under-Secretary-General for Management promulgates the following rules to implement the programme for upgrading the substantive and technical skills of staff members:

Section 1

Objectives and contents of the programme

1.1 The programme for upgrading substantive and technical skills aims to provide departments and offices throughout the Secretariat with a means to ensure that they can carry out their substantive work and adjust to new mandates and responsibilities by maintaining and developing the skills of their staff within the allocated resources. The programme provides staff with opportunities for professional growth and development.

1.2 Staff development activities that may take place under this programme include specialized training, research, seminars, refresher courses, professional conferences and workshops. Where the skills and knowledge required can best be acquired through hands-on experience, on-the-job training assignments may also be included. Activities may be carried out in-house or externally, under the conditions set out in section 3.

Section 2

Delegation of authority

* Personnel Manual index No. 4480.

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2. Responsibility for managing the resources allocated to each department or office under the provisions of the present instruction is hereby delegated to the heads of departments and offices concerned.

Section 3

Annual training plans

3.1 Preparation. Each department or office shall determine its training needs and set priorities for achieving its strategic goals and developing its human resources. Individual training requirements shall be identified during work-planning and performance management discussions in the context of the performance appraisal system or in individual discussions of training requirements with supervisors, which staff members are encouraged to initiate. On that basis, the department or office shall prepare an annual training plan that aims to provide training opportunities for all categories of staff and to achieve a reasonable gender balance. Departments and offices may wish to consult Staff Development Services, Office of Human Resources Management, or the training service at duty stations away from Headquarters on the formulation of the plan. The plan shall be prepared in consultation with staff as provided for by Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/274 of 28 September 1994.

3.2 Submission, review and approval. Departments and offices shall submit their annual training plans at the end of each calendar year to Staff Development Services for review and approval. All plans shall be reviewed to determine whether they are consistent with the objectives and contents of the programme set out in section 1, and with the guidelines for preparing the plans specified in subsection 3.1. When the various plans reveal common needs, centrally organized training programmes may be proposed to maximize use of resources. Centrally organized programmes are offered in the areas of supervision, management, administration, information technology and language and communications skills. Proposals for external training shall be approved in cases where no equivalent training is available within the Secretariat or other agencies of the common system to which Secretariat staff have access, or where it would not be cost-effective to organize in-house training.

Section 4

Funding and administration of the annual training plan

4.1 After review and approval of the training plans, Staff Development Services shall allocate funds to each department and office at the beginning of each calendar year, keeping in mind the need for an equitable distribution of available resources among all departments and offices as well as their effectiveness in carrying out the previous year's plan. Allocated funds may be used for payment of consultants to deliver in-house training courses and for tuition fees, travel expenses, per diem or academic stipends, as applicable, in the case of external individual training.

4.2 Each department or office shall be responsible for the execution of its training plan. It shall inform its staff of the approved plan and shall be responsible for the administration of the use of the funds allocated, including

the approval of individual training requests, which shall be considered in accordance with section 6.

4.3 If necessary, the department or office may adjust the plan as originally approved, provided the adjustments are within the limits of allocated funds and are reported in the annual report required in section 5.

Section 5

Monitoring and evaluation of the execution of the annual training plan

5.1 Staff Development Services shall monitor the manner in which each annual training plan is executed. For that purpose, each department or office shall submit at the end of each calendar year an expenditure report on the use of the allocated funds and a report setting forth the training undertaken by its staff during the year, together with an assessment of the impact of the training on the work of the department and of the individuals involved. The two reports may be consolidated into one.

5.2 The reports shall be reviewed and evaluated by Staff Development Services. Effectiveness in carrying out the approved annual training plan and making optimal use of the allocated funds shall be a major factor in determining allocation of funds for this programme in subsequent years.

Section 6

Conditions for participation of staff members in the programme

6.1 Eligibility. Staff members at all levels holding a United Nations letter of appointment under the 100 or 200 series of the Staff Rules are eligible to participate in the programme. To be granted financial assistance for external training, there should be an expectation of continued service for at least one year after completion of the proposed training activity.

6.2 Individual requests for training. Individual requests for training shall be submitted, through the immediate supervisor, to the relevant department or office, which is responsible for approval of such requests. Requests consistent with the annual training plan may be approved within the limits of available resources. In the case of requests both for individuals to pursue training outside the Organization and for groups of staff to be trained in-house under this programme, the department or office shall take into account the following factors in deciding whether the request should be approved:

(a) The relationship of the studies to the staff member's functions and development and/or organizational needs;

(b) The suitability of the staff member for the proposed studies;

(c) The quality of the programme and the sponsoring institution;

(d) The possibility that the training will have a multiplier effect (that is, for the beneficiary of the training to impart the knowledge gained to other staff members).

6.3 Leave arrangements. Staff members participating in external training activities may be placed on special leave with or without pay, in accordance with staff rules 105.2 (a) (i) and 205.3 (a) (i). They may also use accrued annual leave for all or part of the period of study. The head of department at Headquarters or the chief of administration at offices away from Headquarters may approve special leave with pay for the purposes of the programme for a period of up to 20 working days or a longer period, in accordance with the applicable delegation of authority. Requests for special leave with pay in excess of the period that may be approved at the department or office level shall be submitted to the Operational Services Division, Office of Human Resources Management.

Section 7

Final provision

7.1 The present instruction shall enter into force on 1 October 1997.

7.2 Administrative instruction ST/AI/281/Rev.1 of 9 April 1990 on the External Studies Programme is hereby superseded and abolished.

(Signed) Joseph E. CONNOR
Under-Secretary-General
for Management

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Secretariat

ST/AI/1997/5
14 October 1997

ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION*

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM: TERMS OF REFERENCE OF JOINT MONITORING COMMITTEES AND GLOBAL JOINT MONITORING COMMITTEE

The Under-Secretary-General for Management, pursuant to section 4.2 of Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/1997/1 and for the purpose of defining the terms of reference of the Joint Monitoring Committees and the Global Joint Monitoring Committee established pursuant to paragraph 21 of ST/AI/411 of 18 September 1995, promulgates the following:

Section 1

Joint Monitoring Committees

1.1 Constitution/membership. A Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) shall be constituted in each department or office. The members of the Committee shall be appointed by the head of the department or office and shall consist of two members nominated by management, two members nominated by the staff from the department or office in accordance with local practice and a chairperson nominated by the head of the department or office in consultation with the staff. Each member shall serve for a two-year renewable term.

1.2 Functions. The JMC shall monitor and review the implementation of the performance appraisal system (PAS) by the department or office concerned with respect to timeliness of the process, compliance with its procedures and overall results. It shall work with the department or office to support the institutionalization of the PAS in that department or office for the first three years following full implementation of the PAS, after which the necessity for maintaining JMCs will be reviewed. The head of the department or office shall provide the JMC with the statistical information necessary to conduct this review. While the mandate of the JMC does not include consideration of individual cases, individual staff members may agree that their cases be considered in the context of a discussion of broader issues of general impact.

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* Personnel Manual index No. 12013.

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The JMC shall draw the attention of the Management Review Committee of the department or office to any problems it perceives in the implementation of the PAS and may propose possible solutions.

1.3 Meetings and reports. The JMC shall meet three times a year, namely, at the performance planning stage, immediately after the mid-year review and at the appraisal stage at the end of the performance year. It shall prepare a compliance report for each of those stages. The reports concerning the performance planning stage and the mid-year review shall be submitted to the Management Review Committee through the head of the department or office. The report concerning the appraisal at the end of the performance year shall be submitted to the Global Joint Monitoring Committee, with a copy to the Management Review Committee, within 45 days of the last working day of the relevant performance year. That report shall include a consolidation of the first two reports, a compliance review of the end-of-year appraisals and an overall summary of the PAS implementation process in the department or office for that year.

Section 2

The Global Joint Monitoring Committee

2.1 Constitution/membership. The Global Joint Monitoring Committee shall be a subsidiary body of the Staff-Management Coordination Committee. The Global JMC shall be composed of two members nominated by management, two nominated by the staff and a chairperson appointed after staff consultation by the President of the Staff-Management Coordination Committee. Each member shall serve for a one-year renewable term. The Global JMC shall perform its functions for the first three years following full implementation of the PAS.

2.2 Functions. The Global JMC shall examine policy issues involved in PAS implementation. It shall review the reports submitted by JMCs and prepare one annual report on the implementation of the PAS in the various departments and offices. That report shall include appropriate recommendations on the implementation and overall effectiveness of the PAS and shall be submitted to the Secretary-General through the Staff-Management Coordination Committee.

2.3 Meetings. The Global JMC shall meet once a year, immediately prior to the annual meeting of the Staff-Management Coordination Committee, which will review the report of the Global JMC and transmit it to the Secretary-General.

Section 3

Final provision

The present instruction shall enter into force on 15 October 1997.

(Signed) Joseph E. CONNOR
Under-Secretary-General
for Management

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ST/AI/1997/6
20 October 1997

ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION

MISSION SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE*

The Under-Secretary-General for Management, pursuant to section 4.2 of Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/1997/1 and for the purpose of defining the conditions governing the special mission assignments provided by staff rule 103.21, promulgates the following:

Section 1

General provisions

1.1 Mission subsistence allowance is a daily allowance payable by the Organization for living expenses incurred by staff members in the field in connection with their temporary assignment or appointment to a special mission.

1.2 When a mission has been designated as a special mission, in accordance with staff rule 103.21 (a), the salary of a staff member assigned from another duty station shall continue to be subject to the post adjustment and allowances, if any, applicable at the duty station from which the staff member was assigned.

1.3 In accordance with staff rule 103.7 (d) (iii), the post adjustment for the mission area shall not be applicable when a staff member is assigned to a special mission under staff rule 103.21 (a) and with provision for mission subsistence allowance.

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Section 2

Eligibility

2.1 Mission subsistence allowance shall be payable to all international civilian staff, civilian police and military observers assigned to a special mission.

2.2 The mission area shall be defined by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, in consultation with the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations in accordance with relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

Section 3

Establishment of mission subsistence allowance rates

3.1 Mission subsistence allowance rates shall be determined on the basis of cost of long-term accommodation, food and miscellaneous expenses at the duty station of the mission assignment. The rates shall be established for each mission by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management on behalf of the Secretary-General, and shall be published.

3.2 Mission subsistence allowance rates may be established wholly or partly in the currency of the mission area. The rates are subject to reductions to reflect accommodation and/or food provided by the Organization.

3.3 Normally, two rates of mission subsistence allowance are established. A higher rate is applicable during the first 30 days of assignment to the duty station to compensate for expenditures related to the set-up and the normally higher accommodation expenses incurred, and a reduced rate is applicable thereafter.

Section 4

Administration of mission subsistence allowance

Administration of mission subsistence allowance in the mission shall be entrusted to the Chief Administrative Officer, under the authority of the Headquarters department or office in charge of the mission.

Section 5

Payment of mission subsistence allowance

5.1 Mission subsistence allowance is payable from the date of arrival at the duty station until the date of departure, i.e., for the period spent on mission-related service, in the following cases:

(a) For actual work days spent in the mission area;

(b) For weekends and official holidays spent within or outside the mission area;

(c) For annual leave accrued while on mission assignment, and taken prior to the expiration of the mission assignment where the annual leave was accrued;

(d) For sick leave or maternity leave, subject to the conditions specified in sections 7.2 and 8 below.

5.2 When accommodation is provided free of charge by the United Nations, the standard rate of mission subsistence allowance will be reduced by 50 per cent regardless of whether the accommodation provided is permanent, prefabricated or tented.

Section 6

Payment of mission subsistence allowance while on official business within the mission area

A staff member travelling on official business requiring an overnight stay at a location other than his or her duty station within the mission area may receive, in addition to the usual mission subsistence allowance, reimbursement for accommodation at the overnight location. The reimbursement shall be subject to submission of receipts for the overnight stay, and may not exceed the accommodation portion of the mission subsistence allowance rate for the location of the overnight stay.

Section 7

Payment of subsistence allowance while on official business outside the mission area

7.1 A staff member travelling on official business outside the mission area shall receive the daily subsistence allowance established by the International Civil Service Commission for the designated travel location. No daily subsistence allowance is payable when on official travel to the parent duty station.

7.2 For periods of official business outside the mission area, the accommodation portion of the mission subsistence allowance shall remain payable.

Section 8

Payment of mission subsistence allowance while on sick leave or maternity leave

8.1 Mission subsistence allowance shall be payable when a staff member is on sick leave or maternity leave within the mission area.

8.2 A staff member hospitalized in the mission area shall be entitled to one third of the mission subsistence allowance, since accommodation and meals in the hospital are covered by health insurance.

8.3 Mission subsistence allowance shall not be payable when a staff member is hospitalized or on sick leave outside the mission area. However, in case of hospitalization, and in case of maternity leave outside the mission area, the United Nations shall pay for retained accommodation subject to submission of supporting documentation and up to 50 per cent of the mission subsistence allowance rate.

Section 9

Final provisions

The present instruction shall come into force on 1 November 1997.

(Signed) Joseph E. CONNOR
Under-Secretary-General
for Management